DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 122 884 JC 760 270

AUTHOR Bell, Priscilla
TITLE Performance on the L.A.C.C. Guidance Examination, Fall, 1974. Research Study No. 76-4.
INSTITUTION Los Angeles City Coll., Calif.
PUB DATE Apr 76
NOTE 17p.

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$1.67 Plus Postage
DESCRIPTORS Academic Achievement; Community Colleges; *English Curriculum; Grade Point Average; *Grade Prediction; *Junior Colleges; Predictive Ability (Testing); *Reading Tests; Student Characteristics; *Student Placement
IDENTIFIERS Los Angeles City College; *Survey of Reading Achievement

ABSTRACT

In order to assess the effectiveness of the Survey of Reading Achievement Examination in placing freshmen into various levels of freshman English and in predicting scholastic achievement as measured by English grades and total grade point average (GPA), a study was made of 301 Los Angeles City College students chosen at random from the total population of 1,510 students who took the examination in fall 1974. Recommendations based on the examination placed students about equally in the three English levels, and the number of students who actually enrolled in English the first year after taking the examination was approximately equal for each level. The significant but rather low correlations of the examination with English grades and GPA in the higher two levels, the non-significant correlation with grades in the remedial level indicate that the examination is not a good predictor of English grades or of GPA. Also, there was no significant difference between students in the recommended level English class and those in non-recommended classes in passing the course. Data are further evaluated by splitting the population according to age and sex of the students and course load. Complete study data are presented throughout the report in tabular and graphic form. (Author/NHM)

****
* Documents acquired by ERIC include many informal unpublished *
* materials not available from other sources. ERIC makes every effort *
* to obtain the best copy available. Nevertheless, items of marginal *
* reproducibility are often encountered and this affects the quality *
* of the microfiche and hardcopy reproductions ERIC makes available *
* via the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). EDRS is not *
* responsible for the quality of the original document. Reproductions *
* supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made from the original. *
****

ED122884

LOS ANGELES CITY COLLEGE

"PERFORMANCE ON THE L.A.C.C. GUIDANCE EXAMINATION, FALL, 1974"

Research Study #75-4

2

Priscilla Bell
April 1976

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

JC 760 270

PREFACE

This study was prepared by Ms. Priscilla Bell, a graduate student at California State University, Los Angeles, as part of an internship program.

We are indebted to Ms. Bell for providing us with this work, which we think will be of assistance in consideration of procedures for placing students in appropriate English classes.

Ben K. Gold

"PERFORMANCE ON THE L.A.C.C. GUIDANCE EXAMINATION, FALL, 1974"

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

Entering first-time day students are required to take the Guidance Examination. Beginning Fall, 1974, the examination consisted of the Survey of Reading Achievement, Advanced Form, grades 9-12. The purpose of this study is to analyze performance on the Fall, 1974 examination and to investigate its usefulness as a tool for recommending students to various English classes. A second objective is to investigate its usefulness in predicting scholastic achievement.

PROCEDURE OF THE STUDY

The sample consisted of 301 students chosen at random from the total population of 1,510 students who took the entrance examination.

Through the cooperation of the staff in the Admissions Office, permanent record cards were examined for the 301 students. In order to investigate the examinations usefulness and student characteristics, the following information was recorded: name, age, sex, the examination raw score, English classes taken and grade received, units attempted, units completed, and grade point average.

The Guidance Examination is used to recommend placement of students in one of three English class categories. Students who score between 1-38 are recommended to Developmental Communications. Students scoring between 39-54 are recommended to one of the English 60 courses. Students scoring 55 or above are recommended to English 1.

PROCEDURE OF THE STUDY (continued)

Data on selected variables for the 301 students was analyzed for the total group and subgroups as indicated in the next section. Adjustments in sample size had to be made as indicated in the findings.

FINDINGS

Of the 301 students in the sample, 6 were eliminated as they had completed an English course prior to taking the Guidance Examination. Of the remaining 295 students, current placement recommendations placed 109 students (37.0%) in Developmental Communications, 90 students (30.5%) in an English 60 course, and 96 students (32.5%) in English 1. Only 107 students (44.4%) of enrolled students (not including 9 students whose transcripts were unavailable) took an English class during the first year after taking the Guidance Examination.

Table 1 indicates percent and raw score, mean and standard deviation for selected groups. The percentages of female and male students are based on the total number of students enrolled at L.A.C.C. (N=250). Percents of other selected groups are based on N=241, as nine students whose transcripts weren't available were excluded. Students included in the "completed a class" group are those who completed any course in either Fall, 1974 or Spring, 1975. If a student enrolled, yet completed no work in either semester, he was included in the "completed no classes" group. Students completing less than 6 units their first semester after taking the examination were assigned to the "less than 6 units" group. Table 2 presents correlation coefficients between the Guidance Examination raw score and selected variables. Table 3 indicates correlation between English grades per level and GPA. Table 4 indicates significance of difference in examination performance between selected

FINDINGS (continued)

groups. The relationship between completing or not completing a class and age level is shown on Table 5 and Figure 1. Table 6 and Figure 2 indicate the relationship between performance on the Guidance Examination and age level. Performance statistics by English level and basis of placement in recommended or non-recommended class are presented in Table 7. Figure 3 is a graphic representation of grade distribution per English level. The relationship between placement in a recommended or non-recommended class is shown in Table 8. Table 9 compares the number of students in recommended classes to be number of students in non-recommended classes. Figure 4 graphically illustrates the percentage of students per English level.

TABLE 1 - Performance on L.A.C.C. Guidance Examination, Fall, 1974

Group	No.	%	Raw Score Mean	Raw Score Std. Dev.
Total	295*	100.0	48.3	14.9
Enrolled at L.A.C.C.	250	84.7	48.0	15.1
Not Enrolled at L.A.C.C.	45	15.3	44.3	12.7
Female Students Enrolled	130	52.0	47.2	9.1
Male Students Enrolled	120	48.0	51.0	19.5
Completed a Class	176**	73.0	49.6	12.6
Completed no Classes	65**	27.0	47.2	20.3
Completed Under 6 Units	26	14.9	48.2	21.0
Students in Dev.Com. F'74,Sp'75	25**	10.4	29.6	8.5
Students in Engl.60 F'74,Sp'75	40**	16.6	40.9	9.5
Students in Engl. 1 F'74,Sp'75	42**	17.4	64.0	14.2

* 6 students who took English prior to taking the examination were eliminated

** 9 students whose transcripts were not available are not included

TABLE 2 - Guidance Examination Correlations to Selected Variables

Variable	No.	r	Significance Level
GPA	140*	.50	.01
GPA - students Completing under 6 units	36	.20	NS
Grades - Dev.Com.			
1st Semester	13	.22	NS
2nd Semester	6	.31	NS
Total	19**	.29	NS
Grades - Engl.60			
1st Semester	23	-.06	NS
2nd Semester	10	.61	.05
Total	33**	.13	NS
Grades - Engl. 1			
1st Semester	20	.59	.01
2nd Semester	6	.05	NS
Total	26**	.49	.05

* Includes only students who completed 6 or more units the first semester after taking the examination

** Does not include 29 students who withdrew from English class

TABLE 3 - Correlation of English Grade to GPA

English Level	No.	%	r	Significance Level
Developmental Communications	18*	24.3	.42	NS
English 60	31*	41.9	.52	.01
English 1	25*	33.8	.56	.01
TOTAL	74*	100.0		

* Those who took less than 6 units or who withdrew from English class are not included

TABLE 4 - Significance of Difference Between Selected Group Examination Performance

Group	N**	t	Significance Level
Enrolled females(F) to males(M)	F - 130 M - 120	-2.0	NS
Unenrolled Students (U) to enrolled (E)	U - 45 E - 250	2.1	.05
Students completing class (C) to those who didn't (DC)	C - 176 DC - 65	-.89	NS

** Not included are 9 students whose transcripts were not available

TABLE 5 - Relationship of Class Completion to Age Level

Age	A Class Completed	No Class Completed	Total
17-	15	5	20
18	58	14	72
19	26	12	38
20	14	5	19
21-30	42	20	62
30+	21	9	30
TOTAL	176	65	241

$\chi^2_{df} = 3.54$, $df = 5$, NS

TABLE 6 - Guidance Examination Performance by Age Level

Age	1 - 38	39 - 54	55+	Total
17-	7	7	5	19
18	27	28	22	77
19	12	11	17	40
20	8	6	5	19
21-30	20	20	24	64
30+	14	8	9	31
TOTAL	88	80	82	250

$\chi^2_{df} = 5.6$, $df = 10$, NS

FIGURE 1 - Percentage of Students Completing a Class or No Classes by Age Level

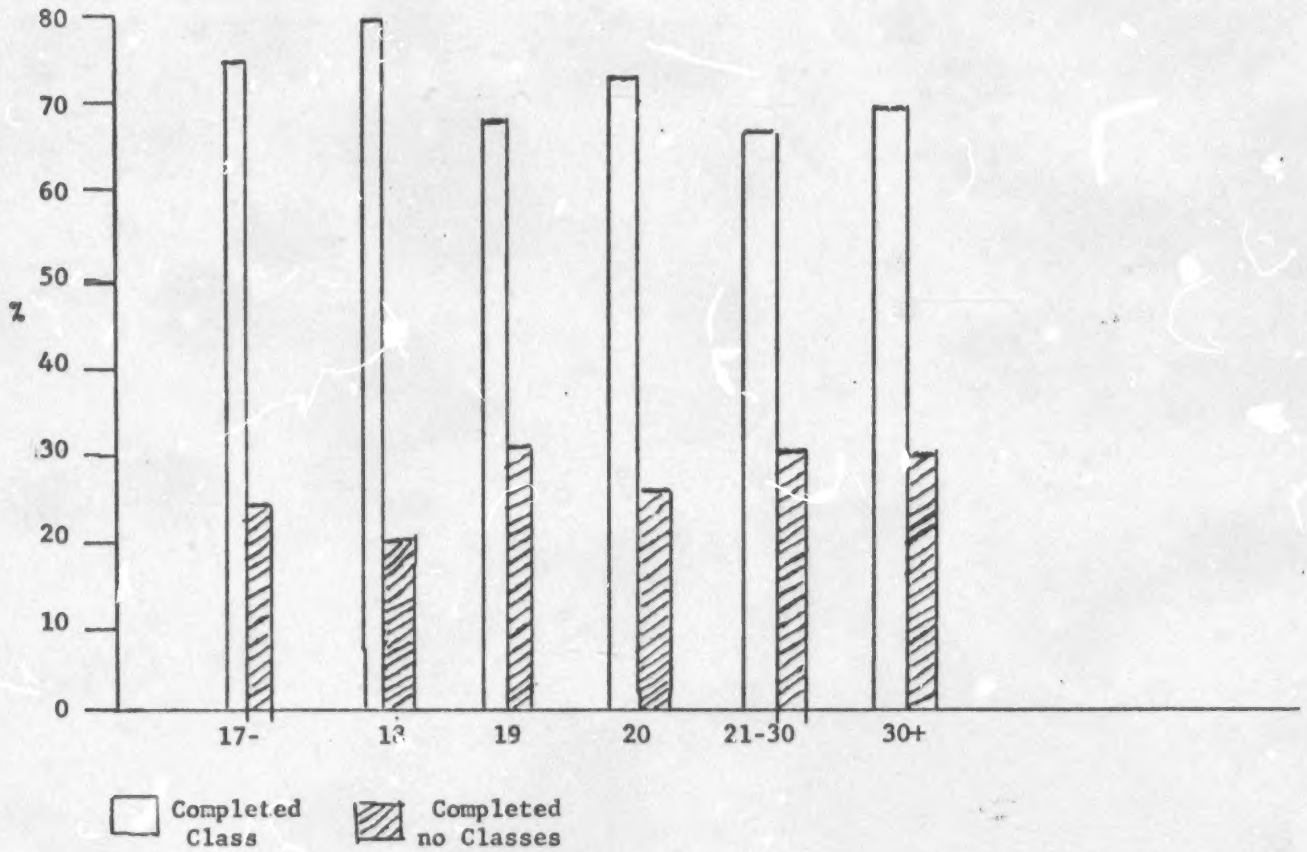


Figure 2 - Guidance Examination Performance by Age Level

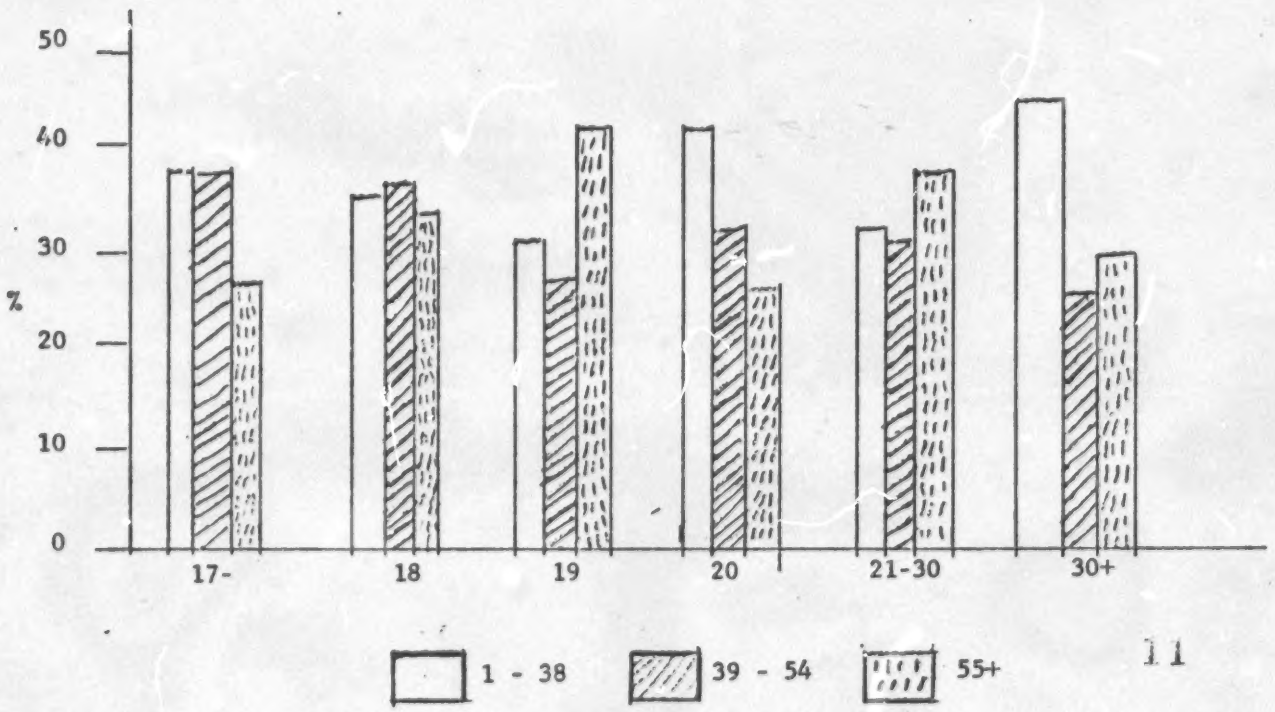


TABLE 7 - Class Performance on Basis of Placement in Recommended or Non-recommended class

	English 1			English 60			Developmental Communications		
	RC*	NRC**	%	RC*	NRC **	%	RC*	NRC**	%
A	4		9.5	1		2.5	5	1	24.0
B	5	1	14.3	10	3	32.5	9		36.0
C	12	1	31.0	10	4	35.0	3		12.0
D	2	1	7.1	2	2	10.0	1		4.0
F				1		2.5			
withdrew in-complete	11	5	38.1	5	2	17.5	6		24.0
Total	34	8	100.0	29	11	100.0	24	1	100.0
% in RC	81.0			72.5			96.0		
% in NRC		19.0			37.5			4.0	
Overall Total	42*** (39.3%)			40*** (37.4%)			25*** (23.4%)		

* RC is an abbreviation for recommended English class on basis of the Guidance Examination scores

** NRC is an abbreviation for non-recommended English class on the basis of the Guidance Examination

*** Students who withdrew from all classes are not included

TABLE 8 - Significance of Difference Between Groups on Basis of Class Performance and Class Placement

	Students in Recommended Class	Students not in Recommended Class	Total
Completed Course with D or better	64	13	77
Incomplete or F	23	7	30
TOTAL	87	20	107

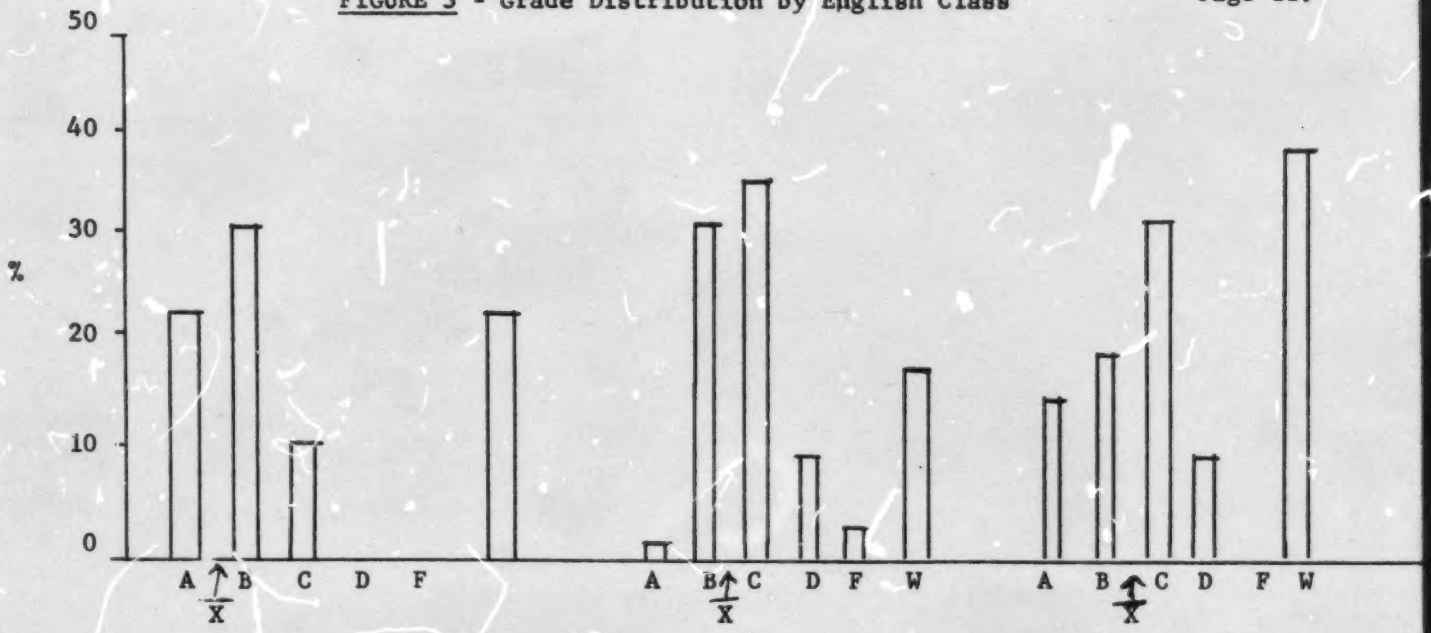
$\chi^2 = .59$
df = 1
NS

TABLE 9 - Number of Students in Recommended Class to Number of Students in Non-recommended class

RECOMMENDED CLASS PLACEMENT

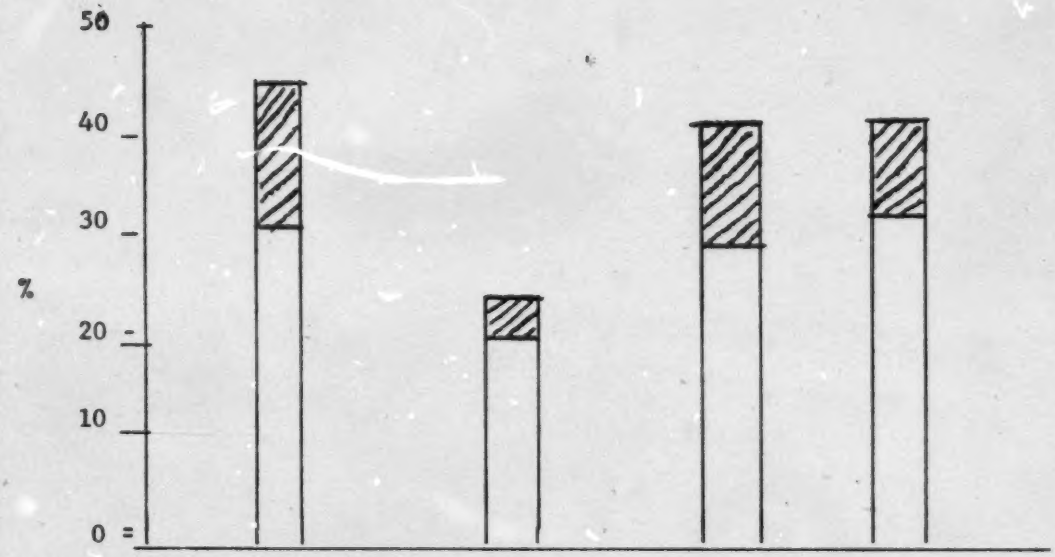
ACTUAL CLASS PLACEMENT	Dev. Comm.	English 60	English 1
Development Communications	24		1
English 60	11	29	
English 1	2	6	34

FIGURE 3 - Grade Distribution by English Class



Developmental Communications | English 60 | English 1

FIGURE 4 - Percentage of Students Enrolled in English and Percentage Enrolled per English Level*



Enrolled in English | Dev. Comm. | Engl. 60 | Engl. 1

* Shaded area indicates percentages of students in non-recommended English class

DISCUSSION

This study reports on performance of groups of students taking the Survey of Reading Achievement as the Guidance Examination in Fall, 1974, and investigates the usefulness of the instrument in predicting English grades and total GPA. The sample consisted of 301 students drawn at random from the 1,510 students who took the examination.

Current recommendations based upon the examination would place students about equally in the three English levels, and the number of students who actually enrolled in English the first year after taking the examination is approximately equal for each level. This is probably because most students enroll in the recommended English class (81.3%). Of the students who do not register for the recommended class, all but 1 (see Table 9) placed himself in a higher level. This would indicate that the students felt they were capable of work beyond what the examination suggested. The significant but rather low correlations of the examination with grades in English 1 (semester 1 and combination of semester 1 and 2), with grades in English 60 (semester 2), and non-significant correlation with Developmental Communications grades indicate that the examination is not a good predictor of English grades. Also, there is no significant difference between students who are in the recommended English class and those who are in a non-recommended class in passing the course. Therefore, the examination's usefulness as a tool for recommending a certain English class to students is questionable. The findings also suggest a correlation between grades in English 1 and English 60 classes and GPA. However, the correlation is not high, indicating only limited predictability of total GPA from these English grades. There is no significant relationship betweem grades in Developmental Communications and GPA, indicating no ability to predict GPA from these grades.

DISCUSSION (continued)

Approximately equal number of females and males took the examination and the performance of the two groups does not differ significantly. Nor does age appear to be a factor in performance on the examination.

Of those who took the examination, most enrolled at L.A.C.C. (84.7%) and most of those students completed 6 or more units (79.6%). The findings indicate that those who didn't enroll scored significantly lower on the examination than those who did. Possibly these people did not enroll as they felt unsure of their ability to handle college work. The findings do indicate that the examination correlates positively, though not highly, with total GPA if a student completes 6 or more units. As the correlation is not high, the usefulness of the examination for predicting academic achievement is questionable.

Of the students who did enroll, 27% withdrew from all classes; however, there is no correlation of examination scores with withdrawal. This indicates, perhaps, that something other than scholastic ability is the cause of students' withdrawing from school. There is also no apparent significant relationship between age or sex with withdrawal from all classes. Between about 20% to 30% of each age group reported did withdraw. It should be noted that while the 21-30 year olds and the 18 year olds comprise the biggest portion of the withdrawing students, this results from the high proportion of those age groups in the sample who enrolled.

The overall results of this study suggest that the Survey of Reading Achievement is not a good tool in either recommending English classes to students or predicting academic success. Therefore, its usefulness as a

DISCUSSION (continued)

Guidance Examination to fulfill these purposes would appear to be limited. Perhaps these findings would be different if a larger sample, or the total population, of those who took the examination was investigated. It is desirable that this be done. If the results are consistent with those of this study, another instrument which would better accomplish the above mentioned functions should be investigated.

* * * * * * * * * * *

UNIVERSITY OF CALIF.
LOS ANGELES

JUN 11 1976

CLEARINGHOUSE FOR
JUNIOR COLLEGES